**Bures St Mary Parish Council Chairman’s Report May 2016**

This has been a year with some change on long standing issues for the parish council. Firstly, it has been agreed that major work will be carried out on The Croft. This does not mean it will be an adopted road but the sum available is sufficient to make a considerable difference to the surface. Secondly, Suffolk Highways have agreed that the appalling record of accidents on the B1508 between Bures and Sudbury warrants a speed limit of 40mph being introduced. There has been a complaint about this, which will cause a delay in the Road Traffic Order, but we hope both The Croft and the speed limit will be sorted before next winter. The third item, which has been on the agenda for many years, is Bank House. This listed property had been allowed to fall into disrepair and it seemed that no amount of concern raised made a difference. However, work on the exterior has taken place and Bridge Street looks all the better for this.

We have been plagued by problems with dogs on the recreation ground. The majority of dog owners have been responsible and we are aware that some pick up after other people’s dogs. We made the decision that there should be a clear demarcation between the areas available for human play and sport and those where dog owners may exercise their pets. There have been ‘teething’ problems in the full sense of the word. Shockingly, a dog owner not only allowed their dog off the lead in the playground area but also was unable to stop it from biting a responsible dog owner. Please help us to manage the use of the field by reminding dog owners who have their dogs off the lead in the play areas that they need to take their dog down near the riverbank or put it on a lead.

The council continues to meet six times a year with members serving on the Sportsground Committee which also meets six times and The Cemetery Committee which meets quarterly. The council is represented on other bodies such as The Community Centre Committee and Suffolk Association of Local Councils and is a link with the trustees of Bures Common. There have been some changes in councillors this year. Sadly, Philip Arnold stood down at Christmas due to health problems. Joe Carpenter, Becky Butcher and Michaela Cudmore have stood down for personal reasons in recent weeks. I would like to thank all four councillors for their work for the council and to thank them for their continuing work for the community in other ways. It is testament to the vitality of the village that we have had new faces coming forward expressing interest in becoming councillors. Also heartening was the turn out for the litter pick which took place in rather inclement weather on a Saturday in March.

Our recreation ground is one of which to be proud. There are few villages of our size that have such excellent facilities. To take things to another level the Sportsground Committee has ordered an exciting new piece of climbing equipment for teenagers and adults. It has an app which can be used to compete against yourself or others. The smart new green fencing for play area is another of this year’s achievements.

I would like to thank our Babergh District Councillor, Lee Parker and our Suffolk County Councillor, James Finch for their work on our behalf and Bures St Mary Parish Council for putting my name forward for the Buckingham Palace Garden Party. It was an honour to attend as your chairman. Last, but certainly not least, thanks to our extremely hard working clerk, Jenny Wright.